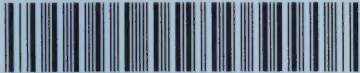


CA2ALED 800

73R21

GOV DOC

ALBERTA LEGISLATURE LIBRARY



3 3398 00489 2153



A Reader's Companion to the Alberta

WORTHREPORT

on Educational Planning

'A choice
of futures'



CA2ALED 800

73R21



Reader's Companion to THE WORTHREPORT

The Commission on Educational Planning was established in June 1969 under Dr. Walter Worth, then a Vice President of the University of Alberta. Its task was huge: to investigate social, economic and technological trends for the next 20 years; to examine the needs of all individuals in our society; to analyse our total educational requirements; to recommend the future changes, structures, and priorities necessary for a comprehensive educational system.

Between 1969 and 1972, with the help of nearly 100 expert consultants, the commission sponsored or co-sponsored dozens of research studies, held 36 public hearings involving 5,000 people across the province, received 330 briefs, convened 14 large conferences, and launched three major task force investigations which were made public in 1971. Cost of the commission activities to Alberta taxpayers was \$439,319 – not counting the printing of the report, or revenue from its sale.

By comparison, the 1968 report of Ontario's Hall-Dennis Commission on Elementary Education cost \$645,000 and the Wright Commission on Post-Secondary Education in that province, while still incomplete, is expected to cost \$1.37 million.

On June 16, 1972 the commission's report "A Choice of Futures" was presented to our provincial government. This document is now the centre of wide public discussion. Over 13,000 Albertans have purchased copies of the colorful 325 page report. Have you got yours yet?

First tasks...

The commission began its investigations by considering three basic questions:

- What **seems** to lie ahead for Albertans?
(projections, trends, forecasts)
- What do Albertans **really want** to lie ahead?
(ideals, goals, principles)
- How do we get what we want?
(support, change, adaptation)



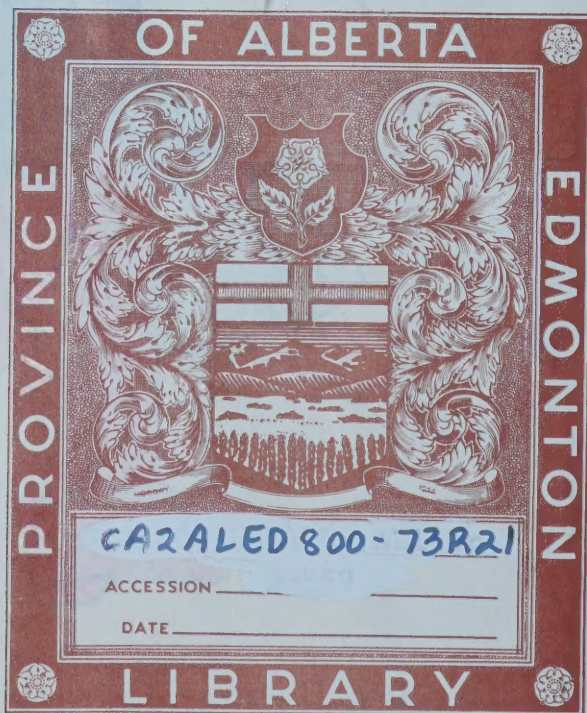
What seems to lie ahead...

On the basis of existing evidence and special research, here are some of the projections, trends and forecasts reported by the commission:

- Alberta's population will double (to more than 3 million) by 2005. Meanwhile, the under 25 age group will decline from 51% (at present) to 43%.
- 80% of the population will be urbanized by 1980 (vs 71% now) – increasing to 90% by 2005.
- Per capita income will increase from \$3,000 in 1970 to \$4,500 in 1980 and to \$13,800 in 2005.
- The influence on our lives of religion, work, marriage, and the family will decline in the future.
- Mental illness, crime, drug abuse and alcoholism will increase.
- Tensions between rich-poor, young-old, French-English, red-white, management-labour will all increase.



LOOK
WE'VE
CHANGED!



- The use of computers in our homes and schools will become common in the 1980's, and widespread in the 1990's.
- School attendance (both hours and days) will be much curtailed by 1990. Telecommunications technology will (and is at present) moving education out of the schools and into homes.
- By the turn of the century, use of chemicals to improve memory and assist learning will be common.

These are just a few of the things which **seem** to lie ahead. You will find many more when you read the report. And the commission reminds us that these forecasts, trends and projections **can be made to change**.

What we really want to lie ahead...

While the commission was investigating what **seems** to lie ahead, it was also finding out what Albertans **wanted** to lie ahead.

Do Albertans want a different future from the one which seems to lie ahead? Yes, they do in many instances, says the report.

From the hundreds of briefs, presentations and studies which represented the views of many thousands of Albertans, the commission analysed what people wanted. This analysis brought forward a number of educational **ideals, principles** and **goals** which are apparently shared by the great majority of our citizens. The report discusses them in this way:

four ideals

Education must always plan ahead, and look ahead, and educate ahead (**Futures Perspective**). Our school system must support the concept that education is a cradle-to-grave process (**Lifelong Learning**). Any reshaping of Alberta's educational system should involve all of our citizens (**Participatory Planning**). Each person should determine his own goals and direct his own life — responsibly and with a social conscience (**Autonomous Individuals**).

Like all ideals, says the report, these may not be totally attainable. But they need to be stated, remembered, and striven for.

ten principles

Our future educational system should obey the following principles:

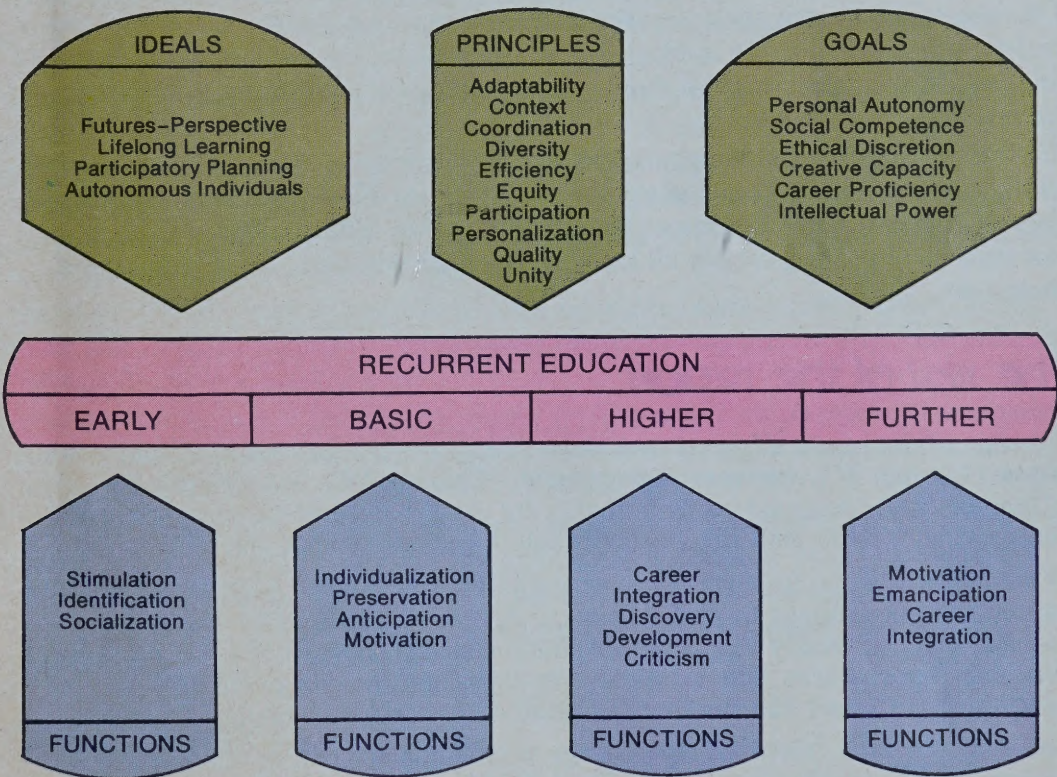
The system, the programs, the people — all should respond successfully to change (**Adaptability**). Educational programs should demonstrate relevance to today's realities and tomorrow's probabilities (**Context**). Functional harmony should exist within the system, and between the system and society (**Coordination**).

Broad educational choice must be available to suit differing individual tastes (**Diversity**). Maximum results must be obtained at minimum effort – and cost (**Efficiency**). Equal educational opportunity must be available to all (**Equity**).

All of those affected should have a voice in program policy (**Participation**). Education should be related to the needs, aspirations and rights of individuals (**Personalization**). Education should strive for excellence in all it undertakes (**Quality**). Education should develop those behaviors which cement our common humanity (**Unity**).

No discernible public discussion has yet appeared concerning these ideals and principles, and the goals which follow. Their endorsement (or modification) by Albertans would provide the sense of direction that curriculum builders and educational administrators have long sought. Many thousands of dollars in further exploration would also be saved.

Figure 3
Sense of Direction



six goals

- **Personal Autonomy** – growth towards self-hood and individual freedom
- **Social Competence** – growth towards successful relationships with others
- **Ethical Discretion** – growth towards personal values and social conscience
- **Creative Capacity** – growth towards broad leisure interests and skills
- **Career Proficiency** – growth towards occupational competence
- **Intellectual Power** – growth towards effective thinking, feeling and knowing

How do we get what we want...

The report, in effect, asks us to agree that a **good** futures forecast is one which supports the goals, ideals and principles of Albertans. A **bad** futures forecast is one in opposition to these goals.

What **seems** to lie ahead is therefore a mixture of **good** and **bad**. So, to assure that the good will happen, we must help it, **AND**, to stop the bad from happening, we must begin opposing it, **BUT**, whatever is inevitable, we must adjust to.

To underline two particular futures which appear open to us, the report presents models of a **Second Phase Industrial Society** and a **Person Centred Society**.

Like any social models these are oversimplified and very theoretical. We know real societies will never be as black and white as these, but will instead be a mixture. Nevertheless, each of these two very different models has the ring of truth to it.

The report suggests that the goals, ideals and principles of Albertans are better suited to a **Person Centred Society** than to a **Second Phase Industrial Society**. So, the report plans in that direction. But not all the way. Education, by itself, is not capable of moving society all the way, in either direction. Read about these directions.

The rest of the report

The rest of the report suggests **structures** (Chapter III), **processes** (Chapter IV), **plans** (Chapter V), **resource management** (Chapter VI) and **priorities** (Chapter VII) designed to help make the good forecasts be true, the bad forecasts be untrue, and the unchangeable forecasts at least tolerable.

What happens if the forecasts were wrong in the first place? At best, we will have caused the good things to really happen. At the least, we will have moved towards what we really want and will have guarded against what we don't want. And the report warns that we must constantly update our planning procedures to cover the possible – indeed, probable – change in trends.

Someone has said, "Give me the courage to change what can be changed, the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, and the wisdom to know one from the other." He could have been talking about the Worth Report. This is what it tries to do.

Early education

In the report, early education refers to the years before six; grades 1 to 12 are called basic education.

The report comes out strongly in favor of publicly-supported early education programs available to all five year olds, and for special head start programs for handicapped and disadvantaged children as young as three.

Noting that Alberta is the only province in Canada without established plans for the pre-school years, the commission reports that it found overwhelming support for such programs from private citizens and professional educators.

The report shows particular concern for the physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped, and for those children disadvantaged by reasons of culture, geography or economic status.

The pre-school recommendations of the report refer to "universal opportunity for five year olds" instead of the more familiar term "kindergartens". This is because the kinds of programs it recommends are closer to those of the British Infant School than the typical Canadian kindergarten program.

It is recommended that pre-primary programs operate half days and that two programs a day could be accommodated using the surplus of classrooms now available in our schools.

Presently, children of 5.6 years are eligible for entry to grade one of the province's basic education program. Under the Worth Report recommendations, some of these children would still be in early education.

The report predicts that in 1975 there will be 32,000 five year olds eligible for early education and another 18,800 handicapped or disadvantaged three and four year olds needing head start programs.

Total provincial expenditures forecast for early education in 1975 would be just over \$21 million, with \$14 million going towards programs for five year olds, the balance for head start programs.

Another provincial responsibility would be to provide child-rearing information for the parents of young children. Part of this would be undertaken in a television series called Early Ed, which would be delivered everywhere in the province.

The central role of Early Ed, however, would be as a learning package aimed at all pre-school children – an Alberta package using Sesame Street techniques.

To be absolutely sure that no child in Alberta whose parents want him to participate is left out, the report also recommends mobile classrooms and travelling teachers.

Basic education

Our grade 1-12 school system will take on quite a different look if the Worth Report is implemented. Elected public and separate school boards (fewer of them with larger territories) would still administer funds and programs.

Attendance would still be compulsory to age 16. But many different things would be happening both outside and inside the schools.

Right now public schools tend to be carbon copies of one another. The report suggests that each school should reflect the uniqueness of its clients and community. Not carbon copies, but originals.

One school might stress the arts, another the sciences. Different methods of teaching and learning might be employed in different schools. Many alternatives would be available, especially in urban areas. Presently, some of these alternatives are provided only by private or proprietary schools.

Parents and students would have a much greater voice in basic education, including some very real powers. Look at the topical outline of the report on p. 322 and read about Involvement (p. 69) School Councils (p. 126) Community Schools (p. 146) Pupil Power (p. 167).

Many of these proposals for basic education have been generally accepted by parents and teachers for years. But never practised, says the report. For instance, nearly everyone will agree that each child should develop his own individual identity at school. But it is not enough to agree upon individualization, we must do it. And the report suggests many ways of doing it.

One of the ways suggested involves increased independence for the learner, with more resources at his call. Especially technical resources such as films, TV tapes, learning kits and access to computer material. The report argues that contrary to what some say, such technology will not dehumanize the individual. In fact, properly used, technology can make us more human — just as machines helped take eight year olds out of the coal mines.

Another key idea of the report is that much more practical work experience must be integrated with schooling — as a means of making learning more meaningful. “Life Experience”, the report calls it. Still another important proposal is aimed at the early diagnosis and in-school treatment of all children with learning disabilities, and a provincially operated network of services for all handicapped children.

Basic schooling must be much more flexible as well. The school year should be reorganized to allow more flexible programs. The present grade 12 departmental exams should be replaced by new tests and more local evaluation. The new tests would measure how well a student has mastered thinking, instead of how much he can remember — or how he compares to a classmate.

Special emphasis must be placed on rural education. Fairness in education does not mean the same amount of money for every pupil; rather, it means the same amount of opportunity for every pupil. This would mean a greater share of money for rural pupils, and others in special educational circumstances. This theme (that true equity requires unequal funding) runs through the entire report. Read about it on page 72, or 78 or 81, or 160, or 277 — the topics are all different but the principle is the same.

Higher education

Higher education involves universities, colleges, technical institutes and vocational centres. The report says that no more institutions of this conventional type should be built for the next 15 years, if ever. Instead, alternatives are needed to break down the barriers to higher education. These alternatives would feature access for all, stressing a number of new kinds of delivery systems.

Some of these new delivery systems are discussed on page 12 of this brochure.

Universities and colleges presently are administered by two commissions which serve as middlemen between government and the institutions. The middlemen should be eliminated, says the report. Their powers should be divided, giving both the government and the institutions more freedom of action.

Each student attending university costs the public purse an average of \$3385 (1970). There is a vested interest, within universities and the professions, to lengthen rather than shorten programs. Educationally, there are few sound reasons for lengthening programs, and quite a few for shortening them. In the future more stress must be placed on after-degree education rather than before-degree education.

For these reasons, all general, and most professional first degree programs at universities should be reduced in length.

The Technical Institutes should begin offering degrees in some fields. College diplomas should have equal status with degree programs. The Vocational Training Centres in Edmonton and Calgary should be amalgamated with the colleges in these cities.

The institutions in higher education should concentrate on different types of career preparation: the colleges on occupations in the service sector, the institutes on specialized technical knowledge, the universities on the professions and highly specialized occupations. Expensive programs should not be duplicated by several institutions. Thus dentistry should not be offered at both the universities of Alberta and Calgary; Olds College might offer sophisticated agricultural technology, but not Fairview College.

And, as one of its top ten recommendations, courses taken at any institution of higher education would be smoothly transferable to any other institution offering similar or related programs.

Specific suggestions for every higher education institution in the province are given on pages 84-96. Read about them.

Further education

Early education and further education are the two extensions proposed by the commission to make Alberta's educational system lifelong. And lifelong, recurrent education is the overriding thrust of this report.

For some, further education will begin after basic education ends; for others, after higher education. Either way, it becomes our longest period of education because it goes on as long as we go on.

Because the pace of change has become a gallop requiring frequent periods of re-training and career change, further education has taken on dramatic new importance in our lives. Our increasing amount of leisure time has heightened that importance and multiplied the demands.

It is said that doctors bury their mistakes; our schools pass their mistakes on to further education. Proper help must be available.

Despite all this our present allocation of resources to further education is quite primitive. This must change, says the report.

Let the report fall open at any page. The chances are better than even money that either the left hand page or the right hand page will include some concept related to further education.

Then read, specifically, Work (p. 3) Values (p. 6) Two Alternative Futures (pp. 31-32) Lifelong Learning (p. 38) Further Education (pp. 59-61; pp. 109-114; p. 136; p. 279) Mature Learners (p. 164) Life Experience (pp. 177-182) Leisure and Creativity (p. 183) Learning Resource Units (p. 261).

Save the Alberta Academy and the ACCESS network for dessert.

The process of education

The report devotes a full chapter to the “process” of education — what should be learned, how to learn it, and how to teach it. The chapter extends through early, basic, higher and further education. It is a chapter of ideas, not details. Details were not in the terms of reference of the commission.

By including a chapter on the process of education, the report takes on a task attempted by very few educational commissions anywhere. But Dr. Worth felt that since the process of education had a strong effect upon the shaping of our entire society, it could not be ignored. In fact, this process should be used to help shape our society in new directions. Some refer to this as social engineering.

The report recognizes that many other forces are at work engineering human behavior. For instance, the mass media, advertising, the profit motive and mass consumerism cause people to act in certain ways. The report considers many of these ways undesirable — in fact, a threat to our very survival as a civilization.

To block such undesirable manipulation, the report proposes that people must be equipped against it. Such equipment can be gained through the process of education — which means that education must begin its own competitive engineering system.

The report does this by introducing some curriculum suggestions which are quite different from Math 8, English 30 or Geography 309. They include problem solving; communications; valuing; situational management; propaganda screening; decision-making; logical and lateral thinking. Read page 216-217, which is where the process section is put back together.

Perhaps even more important, but more difficult to grasp, is the concept of a “modal-mix”. One way of introducing this concept is to say that the commission does not believe that familiarity breeds contempt. Rather, familiarity fosters tolerance, understanding and better human relations while fighting ignorance, selfishness and bigotry. Still another approach would be to compare the modal mix with the notion of unity through diversity.

There are many ways to learn, but some ways are better for learning certain things. While working under the absolute control of a teacher, one might learn the rules of punctuation, but he does not learn much about responsibility. While sharing full democracy in a group of friends, one learns much about cooperation, but not much about typewriting. While working on his own, one learns how to do things, but not much about sharing. In the report, these ways to learn are clustered around three “modes”: **Institutional, Membership, Autonomous.**

So that everyone can learn all of the skills needed to make our society healthy and each person successful, the report proposes leading all learners through these three modes. Finally, however, learners would be able to specialize in the mode they like best or can handle best. This is the “modal mix”. It is also social engineering. Read about it, especially on p. 301.

It is important to remember, however, that since the commission strongly favors individual freedom, it proposes only as much social engineering as it feels is absolutely necessary to maintain social harmony, while opposing threats from other forces.

Teachers and professors

“Next to the learner, the teacher is the most important person in education,” says the report. But the teacher’s role in the process of education is changing dramatically, and the profession must keep up with that change.

Teachers and professors must open their classroom doors and let the change in. They must form new kinds of alliances with the learner. They must stop trying to pour knowledge in and start trying to tease it out.

Teachers and professors can no longer be cast from one mold. Differentiated staffing will mean that our schools and institutions must be staffed by many different kinds of people. Trainees, volunteers, learning assistants, psychologists, technicians, instructional designers, diagnosticians, evaluators, systems analysts — just to name a few. And, of course, teachers — and professors.

business terms, our schools must follow the concepts of division-of-labour and specialization-by-function. And these concepts are going to affect the teaching profession greatly.

By 1980 all teachers will require four years training to be certificated, the report proposes. Presently 60% of our teachers meet this qualification. Teaching certificates would be good for ten years; then the teacher would have to re-establish his competence. Teachers will be paid on the basis of what they do and how well they do it, rather than by qualifications and experience, as at present.

University professors are not exempted from the report's scrutiny. Special recommendations concerning new teaching styles, tenure and sabbatical leaves are made for them.

The report also discusses a different method of conducting salary negotiations. Consult the topical outline, then read about teachers and professors.

Access and the Alberta Academy

In the report, **ACCESS** stands for the Alberta Communication Centre for Educational Services and Systems; and **Alberta Academy** stands for a completely new concept in higher and further education.

The Academy would deliver high quality education to every community in the province through a combination of travelling tutors, television, radio, telephone, correspondence material, tape cassettes and – eventually – coaxial cable and computers. ACCESS is the technical network which would make this (and other learning systems, such as **Early Ed**) possible.

This combination of learning services is not especially new and is being employed in some other parts of the world. What is new about the Academy is its strategic purpose. The Academy would be both a bridge and an overflow valve between basic education and higher education.

Anyone could take courses at the Academy. If he or she is successful, the courses are free – and transferable for advanced placement to any higher education institution in the province. A full first year of higher education could be taken in this way.

A successful Academy would cut back enrolment pressures at other institutions, allowing more space for senior study. It is because of the Academy that Dr. Worth can recommend no new colleges, universities or institutes for 15 years, if ever.

The Academy would also cut back the costs of traditional higher education very significantly since it has no building costs and its course costs do not change all that much whether it has 3,000 students or 30,000.

In addition to transfer courses, the Academy would offer a two year diploma program of its own – in Community Life and Self Development. Its emphasis would be on maintaining and improving the quality of rural life.

Costs of a beginning program for 10,000 registrants at the Academy are estimated at \$4.5 million. Costs of building the ACCESS network needed to deliver this program (and many others) are shown at \$31 million. A possible technical innovation (now evaluated as practical but requiring further cost study) could reduce this down to \$18 million.

By comparison, building one college for 4,000 students would cost about \$22 million, plus operating costs of about \$10 million per year.

Read about the Academy (pp. 96-109) and ACCESS (pp. 266-271).

Finances

Education is going to cost more in the future, says the report. At the same time, we are all going to earn more money and be more productive. In real terms, education costs will rise just a shade faster than our increased income — up from about 10% of gross personal income in 1970 to 12.3% by 1975. (Incidentally, while costs in the report are **expressed** as a percentage of gross personal income, only part of these costs are actually **payable** from personal income.)

The above estimate will likely apply whether or not the Worth Report is implemented. In other words, the Commission has proposed a package that will cost only slightly more to implement than if we were to carry on with business as usual. Considering the increase in services, this is encouraging.

Implementing early and further education, ACCESS, special programs for natives, the disadvantaged and the handicapped, learning resource centres and their attendant costs, and a new system of grants to students — all will cost more money.

But shortening university degree programs, eliminating departmental exams, implementing the Alberta Academy, raising student fees, adopting certain work experience programs and a number of other proposals for more efficient use of our resources — all will save us money.

The two will about balance. Read about it on p. 276.

The report also recommends in its top ten proposals an Integrated Provincial Development Plan aimed at coordinating planning procedures in all departments and levels of government. The potential savings from this approach cannot be estimated by the commission.

Still, since education is a labor-intensive and therefore cost-rising industry, we will have to find a new source of funds to pay for that increase mentioned in the first paragraph.

The report suggests two possibilities: a five per cent sales tax (which was rejected by the government soon after the release of the report), and a 1% increase in provincial income tax every five years, beginning in 1973.

The report also proposes the removal of education taxes from property, to be offset by a larger allocation of resource royalties to education and a reduction or freeze in the homeowner grant and other municipal grants.

Students in higher education should pay 25% of their education costs (except for the Alberta Academy) instead of the present 14% they are paying now. However, increased student grants should be made available, based on a sliding scale tied to family income. The result would be a slightly more expensive package, even with the increased fees. But it would end the present practice of the poor paying for the education of the rich, says the report.

Take \$5 of the money you are going to save and get the book.

Next steps

Most of the suggestions, proposals, ideas and recommendations of the Worth Report were not intended for legislation at all. It is a report to the people of this province, not just to government. No legislation in the world can make people tolerant, or make people establish their own values, or make learners learn.

Most of the Worth Report can be adopted right now if pupils, parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, citizen groups and the public at large want to adopt it. All they have to do is do it.

But there are a sizeable number of proposals which will require provincial legislation if the report is to be given leadership. Speaking to the matter of priorities, the report says: "Given the twin needs of equity and momentum, the commission urges that the 'top ten' proposals (below) be given immediate and concurrent attention by the provincial government:"

1. provision of universal opportunity and selective experience in early education;
2. abolition of Grade XII departmental examinations;
3. inauguration of the Alberta Academy, Early Ed and the supporting ACCESS network;
4. extension of opportunities in further education;
5. modification in certification requirements for teachers in early and basic education;
6. reorganization of the Department of Education and Department of Advanced Education;
7. revision of funding arrangements for all levels of recurrent education, including provisions for life experience and student assistance;
- 8(a). modification of the school year and
(b). modification of procedures for the transfer of credits;
9. reduction in the length of all general and most professional first-degree programs in universities;
10. preparation of an Integrated Provincial Development Plan.



Response is vital to
fill out this question

want it to. Please
as possible to:

The
Suite
1101
Edm
T5N

JUN 10 74

MAR 10 '76

MAY 10 1983

MAR 10 2000

Look at the eleven

proposals)

1. Are there any pr
order)

mbers here, by

2. Which five prop
"none"; otherwi
need of action)

(If none, say
most in

3. If your answer t
(anywhere in th

proposals
them.

4. What other
reject or m

Alberta. Commission on Educational
planning.

should

(A) Reader's companion to the Al-
berta Worth report

Name

Address

The Worth R
does not hav

ur store

CA2ALEP 800 - 73 R21

Alberta
PROVINCIAL LIBRARY
Edmonton

Please print

Name

Address

City

Postal Code

Please forw

0 per copy.

I am enclos

Provincial T

yable to the

Out of provi

Edmonton.

ilding,

Copies of th

Book!

15

In addition to this brochure, an 18 minute film on the Worth Report is available for free loan to organizations, associations, and discussion groups.

Write:

Audio Visual Services Branch
Department of Education
Devonian Building
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
or phone: 488-6771 (403)

The Readers Companion to "A Choice of Futures" is distributed as a public service by the Communications Branch, Departments of Education, 815 Executive Building, Edmonton, Alberta.

This is a personal interpretive account by the writer, not a new version of the actual report. As such, it has no official status.

Written by Larry T. Shorter
Graphics by Thurlbeck

Published by the Queen's Printer,
Government of Alberta.
Press Run: 500,000

Costs, including mailing to each household in Alberta: \$26,538.

